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Background: Advancements in camera technology has now allowed consumers to purchase durable systems with wide angle views at an affordable price. Due to the high back seat requirement on school buses one camera in the driver's compartment, two cameras installed near the middle, and one camera installed in the rear of the school bus does not allow a view into each seat area.

Question: May a school bus contractor install more interior devices/cameras than what is allowed for in TR300.81(7)?

A school bus contractor shall follow the steps required by Trans 300.80 to obtain approval prior to the installation, but in general, if the guidance below is followed it will be allowed.

Guidance: The Division of State Patrol (DSP) approves the install of additional interior cameras with the following requirements:

- All the requirements of TR300.81(7)(a), (b), (c), *(d), (e), (f) and (g) must be met.
 - *(d) currently limits two devices which must be located near the middle of a school bus.
- DSP will allow up to **three devices** to be installed "located near the middle" of a school bus. "Located near the middle" is defined as the seating area between the front barrier and the rear seat back in front of the rear seat. All other provisions of (d) must be followed.
- If a device is installed in the driver's compartment (a) must be followed. If a device is installed in the rear of the school bus (c) must be followed.
- This exception will now allow a total of five interior devices to be installed in a school bus. One device in the driver's compartment, three devices near the middle of the school bus, and one device in the rear of the school bus.

TR300.81 (7) CAMERA, AUDIO MONITOR OR RECORDING DEVICE / COMPUTER ANTENNA. A school bus may be equipped with a camera, audio monitor or recording device, or computer antenna subject to the following conditions:

- (a) When a device is mounted in the driver's compartment it shall be located so as to not interfere with movement into and out of step well area. When a camera is placed to view through the windshield it shall not be located to the left of the centerline of the school bus. The camera shall be mounted not more than 2 inches below the upper edge of the area swept by the windshield wipers and located outside the driver's sight lines to the road, mirrors, highway signs and signals.
- (b) The device may not interfere with driver visibility and passenger entrance and aisle.

(c) A device mounted in the rear of the school bus shall not protrude more than 6 inches forward of the rear bulkhead or from the ceiling.

(d) A maximum of two devices may be located near the middle of a school bus, if they do not protrude more than 4 inches and are located no more than 15 inches above the side windows that are not emergency exits, measured from the edge of the window frame directly to the device. The device or devices shall be mounted parallel to a seat back. If flush mounted, the device or devices may be located beyond the 15 inch separation from the side window.

(e) All devices shall be securely fastened and contained within a shatterproof housing. All exposed edges or sharp corners shall be protected or designed to prevent injury upon contact.

(f) External devices shall be contained within a shatterproof housing.

(g) A video display, if utilized, shall be mounted in the driver's compartment and within or in close proximity to the forward field of view of the driver. It shall not restrict visibility of the driver's sight lines to the road, mirrors, highway signs and signals, or affect operation of the school bus controls. The video display may be incorporated as part of the interior rear view mirror and display an image when the parking brake is applied, warning lamps are activated, or transmission is in reverse.

Sincerely,

Lieutenant Karl L. Mittelstadt

Division of State Patrol – Motor Carrier Enforcement Section